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NEWS RELEASE

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Judicial Council Report on Early Mediation Pilot Programs Win National ADR Award

San Francisco—The Judicial Council's 2004 report, "Evaluation of the Early Mediation Pilot Programs," has won an award for Outstanding Practical Achievement from the CPR Institute for Dispute Resolution, a national group that promotes excellence and innovation in public and private dispute resolution.

The institute recently announced the award at its annual meeting in New York City.

The Judicial Council's report on the Early Mediation Pilot Programs found that these programs resulted in substantial benefits for both litigants and the courts, including reduced trial rates, disposition time, and pretrial hearings. The programs also resulted in increased litigant satisfaction with the courts and decreased litigant costs in cases that settled at mediation, the report concluded.

At a public meeting in February 2004, the Judicial Council approved the report, which was then submitted to the Legislature.

The pilot programs operated from 2000 to 2004 in five of California's 58 counties: Contra Costa, Fresno, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Sonoma.

Based on the benefits of the mediation programs, the council voted to support their continuation as part of the core operations in the existing pilot courts, and the expansion of such programs to other courts based on those courts' needs and resources.

To view the Judicial Council's winning report, please visit the California Courts Web site at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/documents/emppt.pdf>.

More information on the CRP Awards Program can be found at www.cpradr.org. The International Bar Association also won a Practical Achievement for its Guidelines on Conflicts of Interest.

The Judicial Council is the policymaking body of the California courts, the largest court system in the nation. Under the leadership of the Chief Justice and in accordance with the California Constitution, the council is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial, and accessible administration of justice. The Administrative Office of the Courts carries out the official actions of the council and promotes leadership and excellence in court administration.

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